ISSN 0712-7774

CEREBUS

GOING HOME

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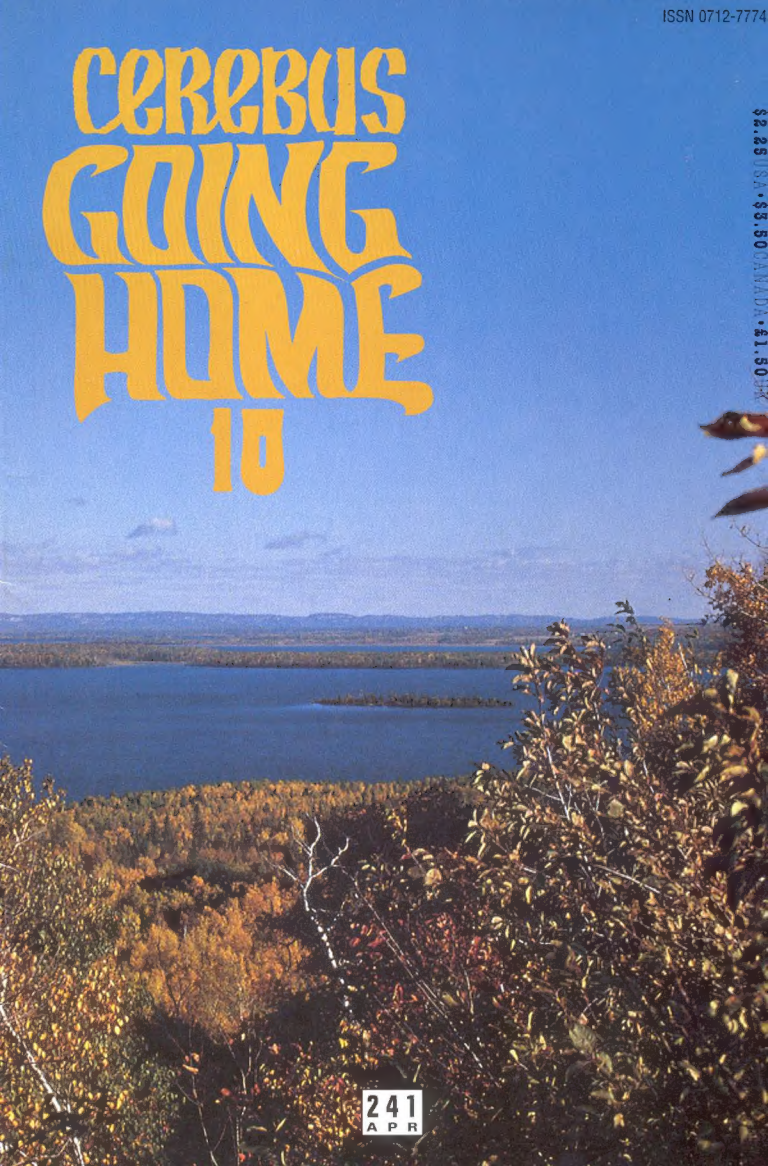

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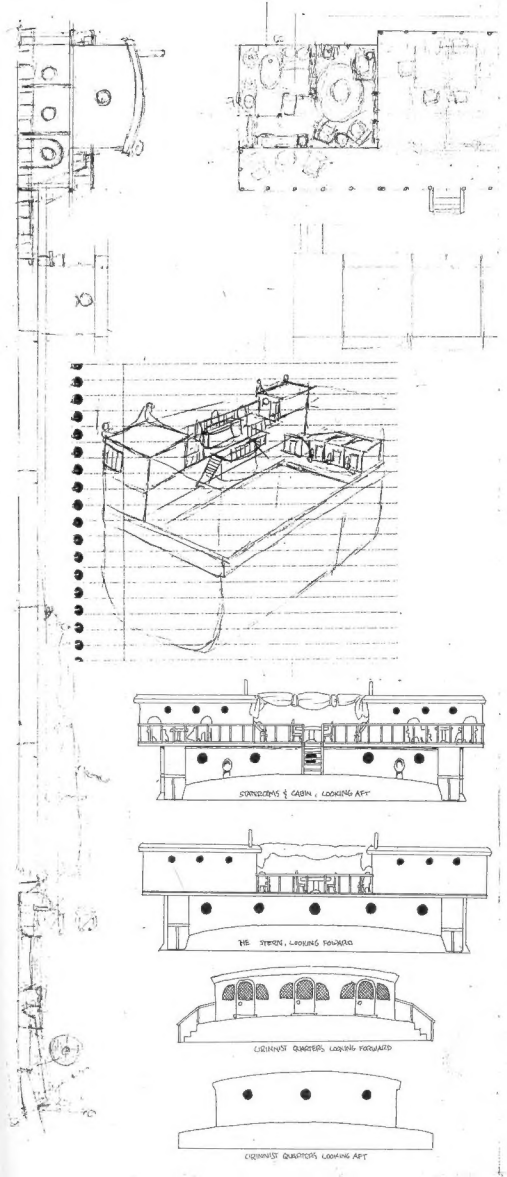
STANDBOARDS & CABIN, LOOKING AFT
THE STERN, LOOKING FORWARD
CUDDINGST QUARTERS LOOKING FORWARD
CUDDINGST QUARTERS LOOKING AFT

CEREBUS

NO. 241 APRIL 1999

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GOING HOME

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BOOK ONE
Sudden Moves
(Cerebus 232 to 239)

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BOOK TWO
Fall and the River
(Cerebus 240 to 250)

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JOZAN: Reserves of creative energy — braced for the onset of mature ambition. (*more specifically*) He's not as...entertaining...as Jozan would have expected — from all the stories Jozan had heard about him.

GINEVRA: No. No, he's not.

(*Silence, and then:*)

JOZAN: (*his peculiar face solidifying around the masculine insight*) *Limited* energy. Limited energy and limited *time*. A man can't live for very long after he has lost even a fraction of what your friend Diver has lost already.

GINEVRA: (*dispelling an inference*) *My* friend? Don't be silly. Jay Anthony Diver doesn't *have* friends. (*dispassionately*) He's probably over there right now, nursing his superiority. You know — creative mind over mere celebrity.

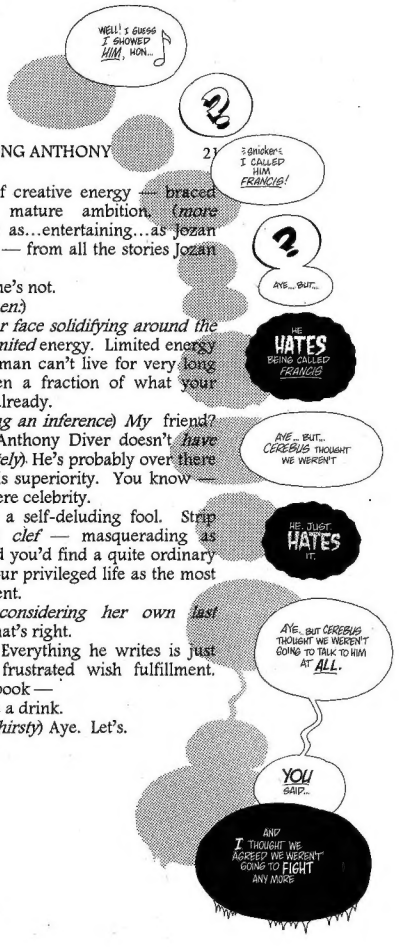
JOZAN: Then he's a self-deluding fool. Strip away his *romans à clef* — masquerading as creative works — and you'd find a quite ordinary fellow as envious of our privileged life as the most common tavern resident.

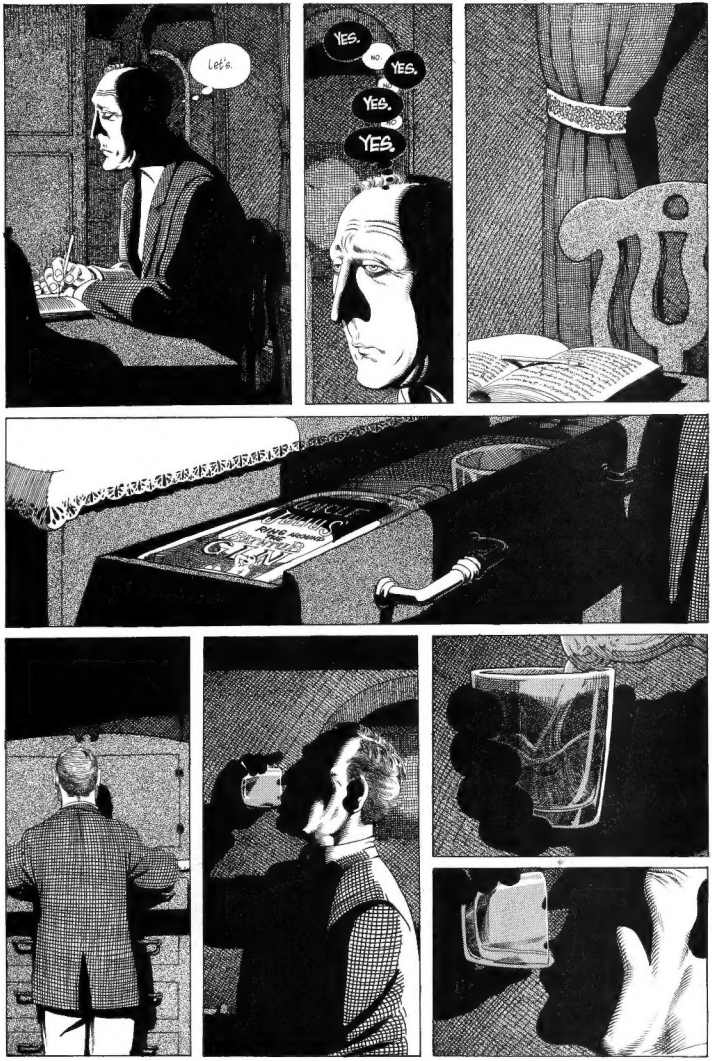
GINEVRA: (*still considering her own last observation*) I think that's right.

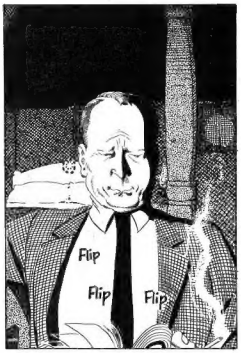
JOZAN: It's true. Everything he writes is just frustrated ambition, frustrated wish fulfillment. Take his most recent book —

GINEVRA: Let's have a drink.

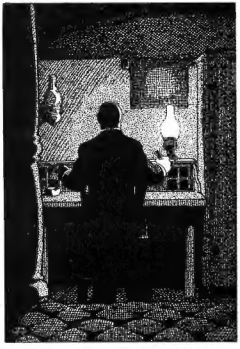
JOZAN: (*suddenly thirsty*) Aye. Let's.

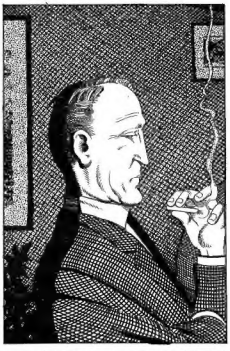

WELL! I GUESS I SHOWED HIM, HON...
?
I CALLED HIM FRANCIS!
?
AYE... BUT...
HE HATES BEING CALLED FRANCIS
AYE... BUT... CEREBUS THOUGHT WE WEREN'T
HE JUST HATES IT!
AYE... BUT CEREBUS THOUGHT WE WEREN'T GOING TO TALK TO HIM AT ALL.
YOU SAID...
AND I THOUGHT WE AGREED WE WEREN'T GOING TO FIGHT ANY MORE

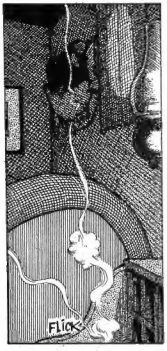

Let's.
YES.
NO
YES.
YES.
YES.

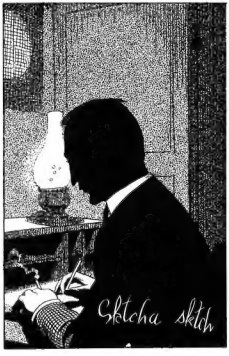


They would have liked to have been her, but not to have paid the price in self control.





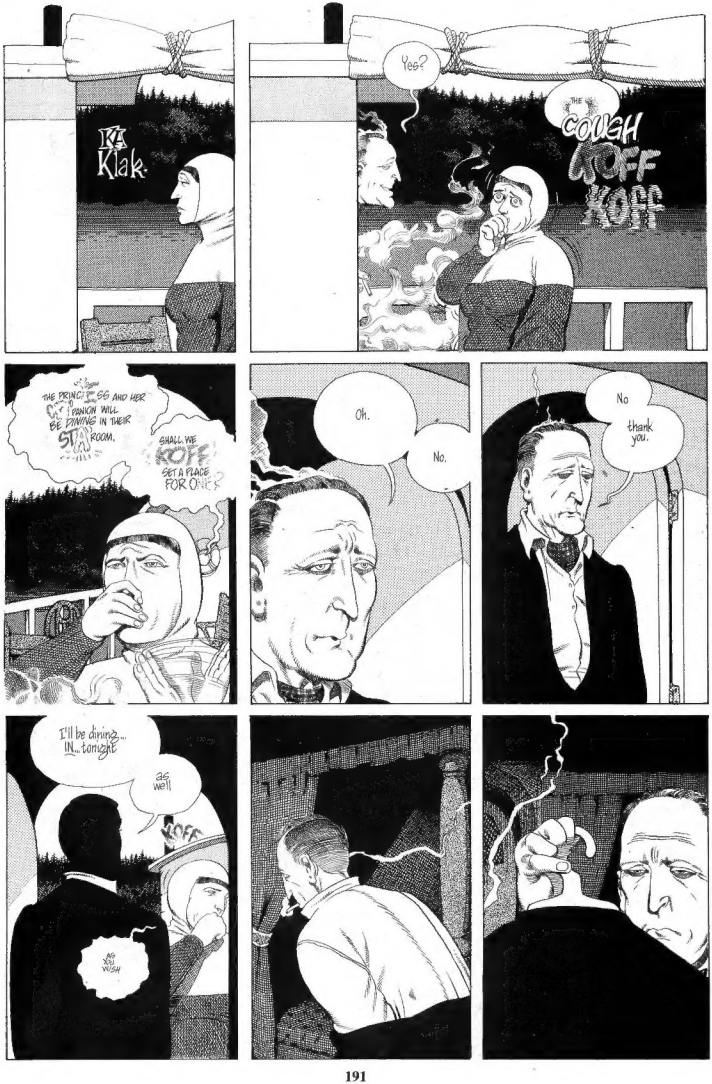


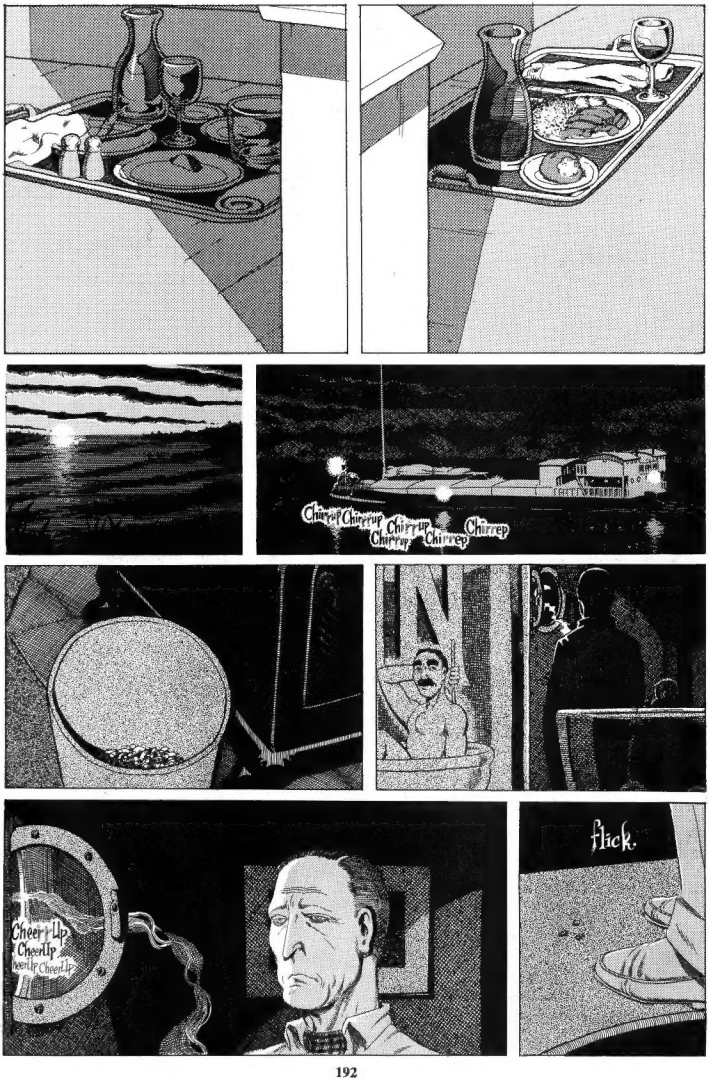


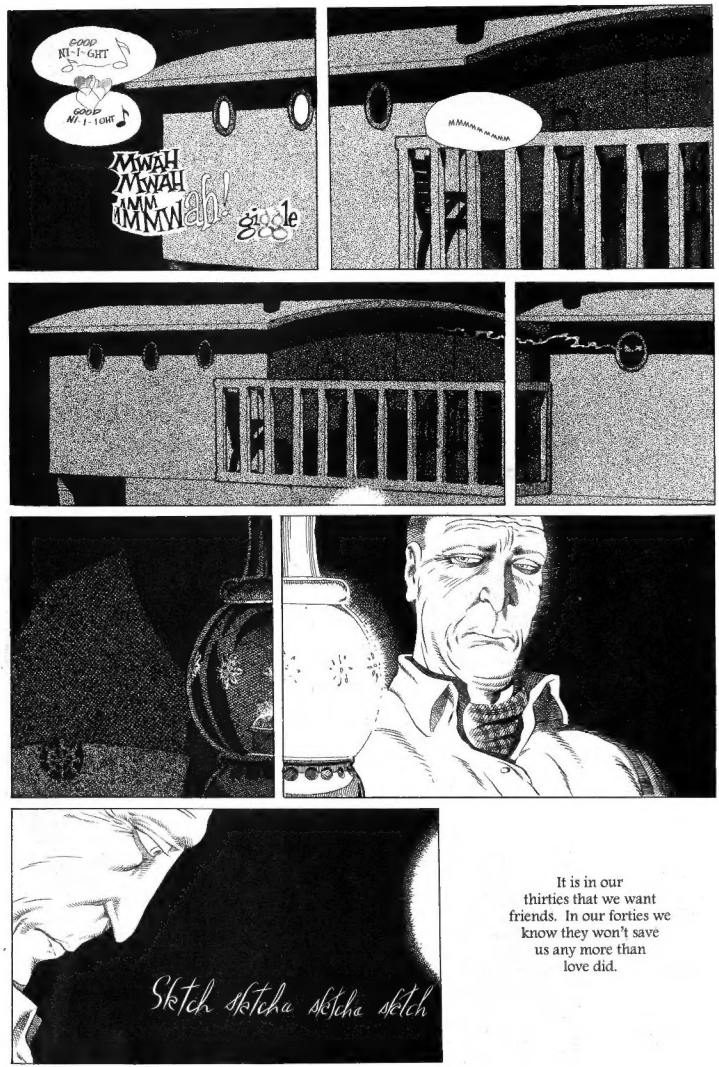
Listen, little Aisha: Draw your chair up close to the edge of the precipice and I'll tell you a story.

sktch sktcha sktcha sktch

"Here was a beauty which had attained..."
"Her beauty had reached ...a point."
"A beauty... that had reached ...THE point..."
"...where..."
SCRAPE
"...where it contained within itself the secret of..." something
"...where it contained within itself, the secret..."
"...the secret..."
A beauty that had reached the point where it contained within itself the secret of its own growth, as if it would go on increasing forever.
KNOCK KNOCK
just a MOment!

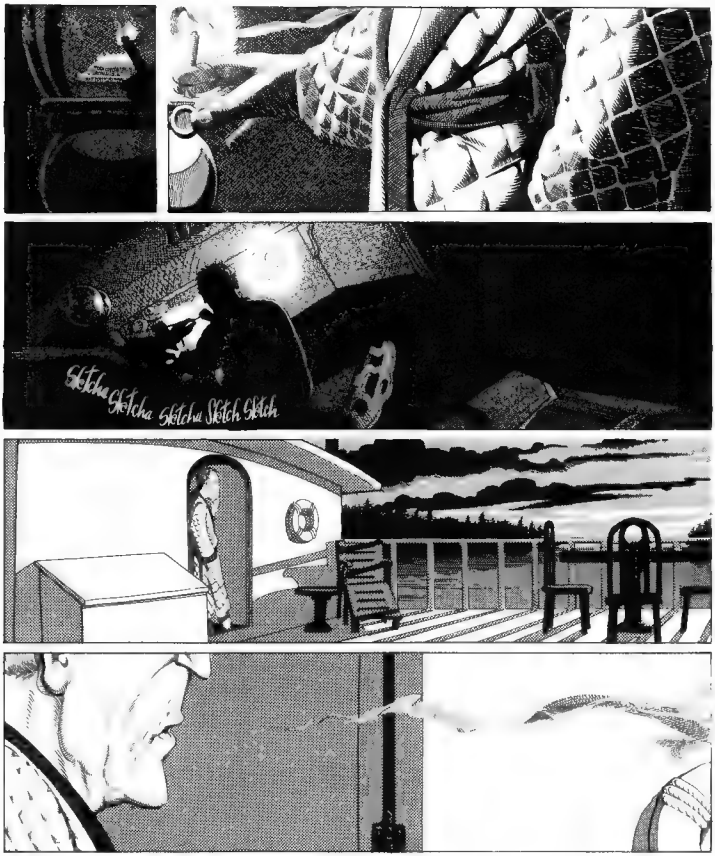

Klak.
Yes?
COUGH
KOFF
KOFF
THE PRINCESS AND HER FIANCÉ WILL BE DINING IN THEIR STATE ROOM.
SHALL WE KOFF SET A PLACE FOR ONE?
Oh.
No.
No thank you.
I'll be dining... IN... tonight
as well
KOFF
AS YOU WISH


Chirrup Chirrup Chirrup Chirrup Chirrup Chirrup Chirrup
Cheer Up Cheer Up Cheer Up Cheer Up
flick.

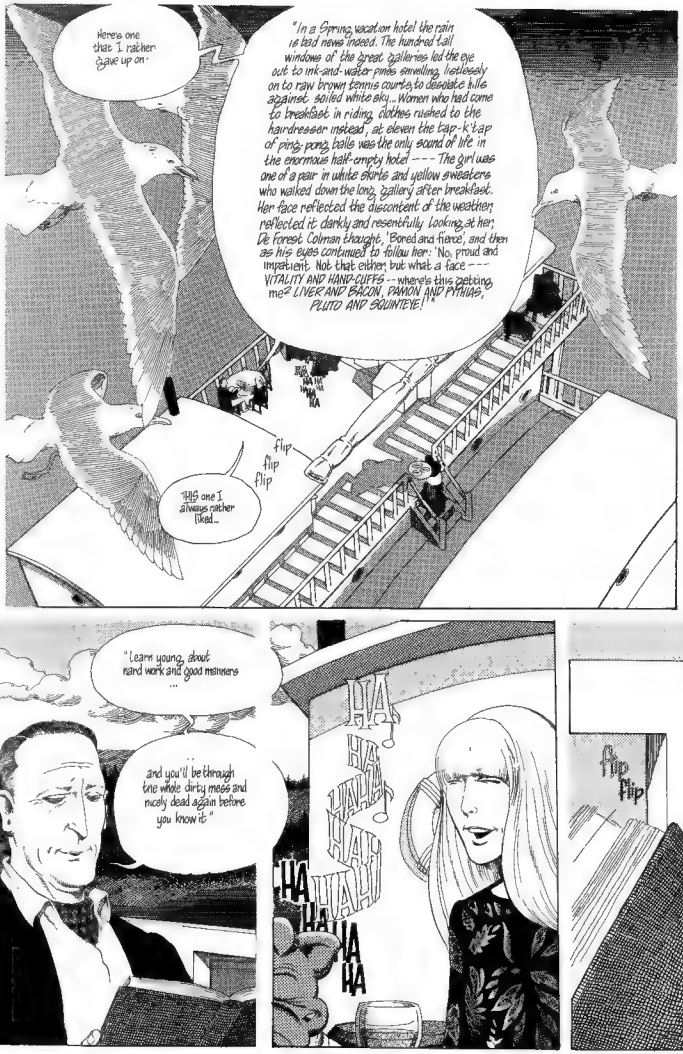


It is in our thirties that we want friends. In our forties we know they won't save us any more than love did.

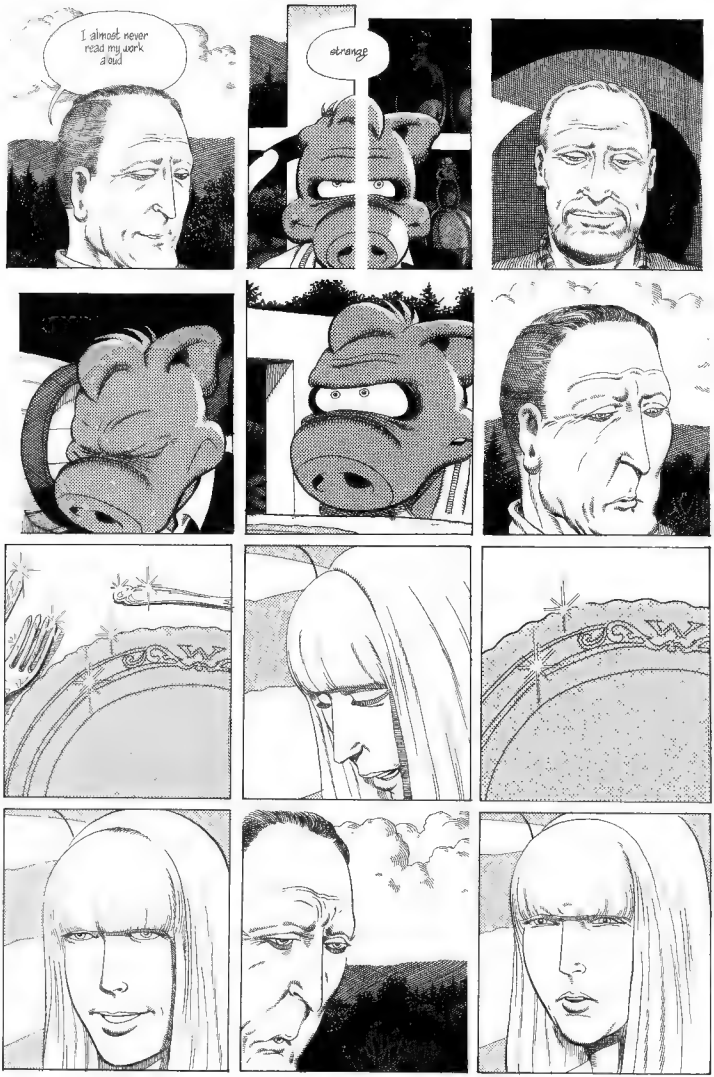
GUN



Our fathers died. Suddenly in the night they died and in the morning we knew.


Here's one that I rather gave up on.
"In a Spring vacation hotel the rain is bad news indeed. The hundred tall windows of the great galleries led the eye out to ink-and-water pines smelling, lifelessly on to raw brown tennis courts, to desolate hills against soiled white sky... Women who had come to breakfast in riding clothes rushed to the hairdresser instead, at eleven the tap-k'tap of ping-pong balls was the only sound of life in the enormous half-empty hotel --- The girl was one of a pair in white skirts and yellow sweaters who walked down the long gallery after breakfast. Her face reflected the discontent of the weather; reflected it darkly and resentfully. Looking at her, De Forest Colman thought, 'Bored and fierce, and then as his eyes continued to follow her: 'No, proud and impatient. Not that either, but what a face --- VITALITY AND HANDCUFFS -- where's this getting me? LIVER AND BACON, DAMON AND PYTHIAS, PLUTO AND SQUINTEYE!'!
HA HA HA HA HA
flip flip flip
THIS one I always rather liked...
"Learn young, about hard work and good manners ...
... and you'll be through the whole dirty mess and nicely dead again before you know it."
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
flip flip

"The kiss originated when the first male reptile licked the first female reptile, implying, in a subtle, complimentary way that she was as succulent as the small reptile he had had for dinner the night before."
Ah!
"You could tell the Hawthorne boys by their table manners. You see, they ate with the servants while their parents divorced and remarried."
Hmph♪
HA HAHA HA HA
HA HA
It...um... LOOKS a little something, if you've never actually had them aforkane to DINE with one of the Hawthorne boys...
HAHA
OH! uh...
HAHA
?
SNORT SNORT
Hen-Hen
AYE.


I almost never read my work aloud
strange

the beautifully crafted china plates, the glittering utensils, capturing the sunlight just so. To whom had they belonged? How long ago? And how had they been wrested from them?

COCKTAIL HOUR

"The problem," Jay Anthony Diver found himself saying, "is that youthfulness is worn away through daily intimacy with another individual. The aging process accelerates through the perilous business of endeavouring to maintain analagous moods." The intricacy of the thought bypassed his listeners, so he reconfigured his argument. "It has much in common with a dance. Whoever is 'leading' in a given moment makes a 'follower' of the other. Once the husband or wife has been 'led' into a mood — be it morose or joyful — they both feel obligated to maintain it. At which point it lacks the sincerity of a genuine mood and becomes, instead, a portrayal which, by definition, is always false."

"Ginevra and Jozan aren't married," said Jozan, his third-person forensics assisting the advance of intelligent discourse in much the same way that a broken ankle benefits a ballerina.

"How *is* your wife Xena?" asked Ginevra by way of "leading" Jay Anthony, enticing him to "follow" her into proximities of her own mood, made rueful and introspective by his observation.

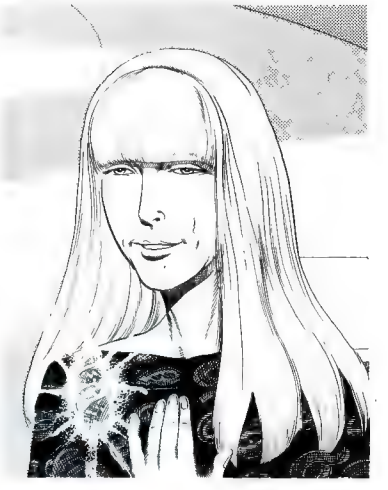
Ah, yes. There it was — the muffled drumbeat resonance which echoed along the once glittering, now darkened and desolate corridors of his interior life in these latter days. Xena. Xena. How *is* Xena?

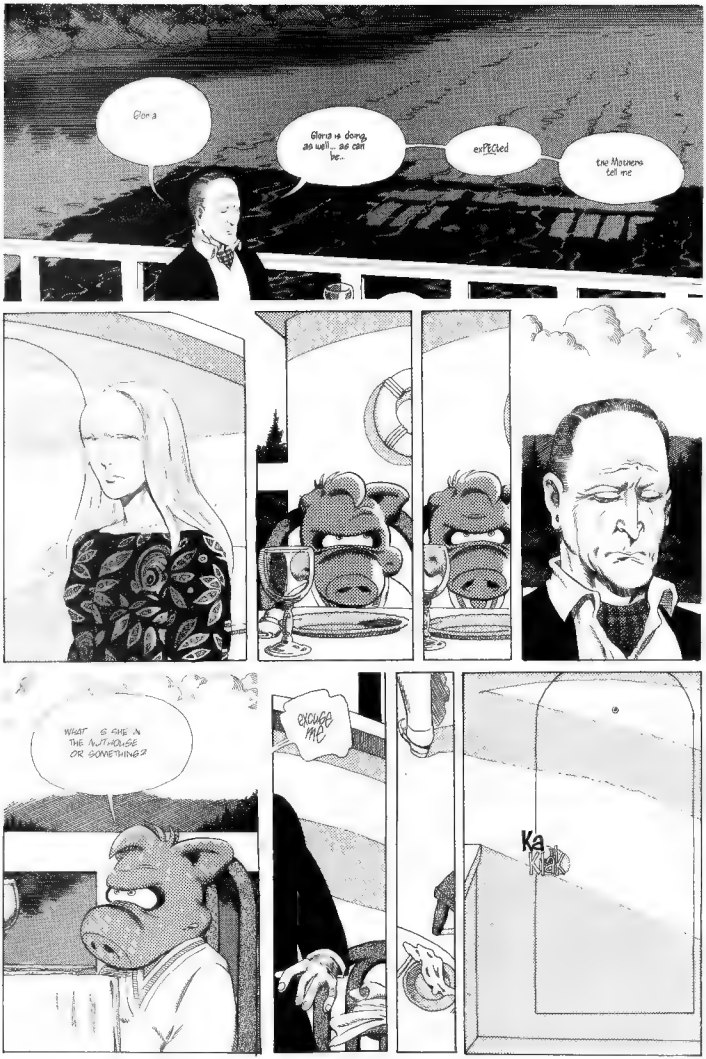
By way of emphasis a ray of fading sunlight broke through the clouds layered upon the horizon, illuminating Ginevra's head and shoulders, as if Nature herself now conspired to refute his argument and thus raise her mood above his own.

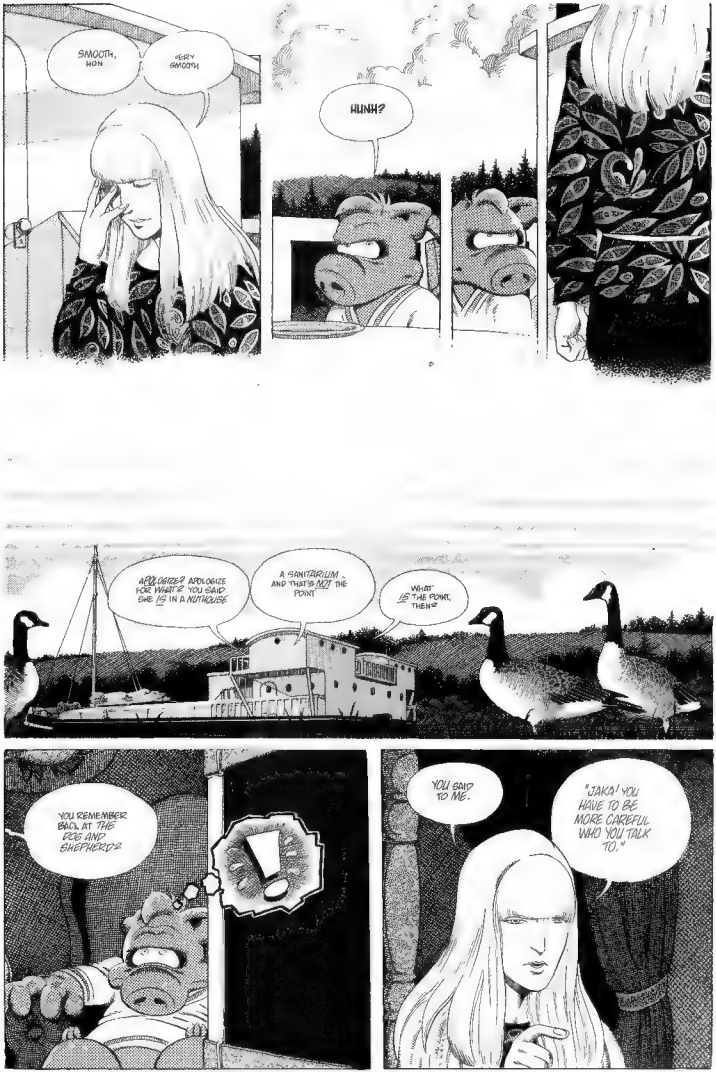
"She's always dead in your stories now, isn't she?" The setting sun intensified at the aristocratic skill which Genevra had brought to bear upon the statement — at the finesse with which she had stripped it of any interrogative quality while rendering it in the musical tones of a common pleasantry.

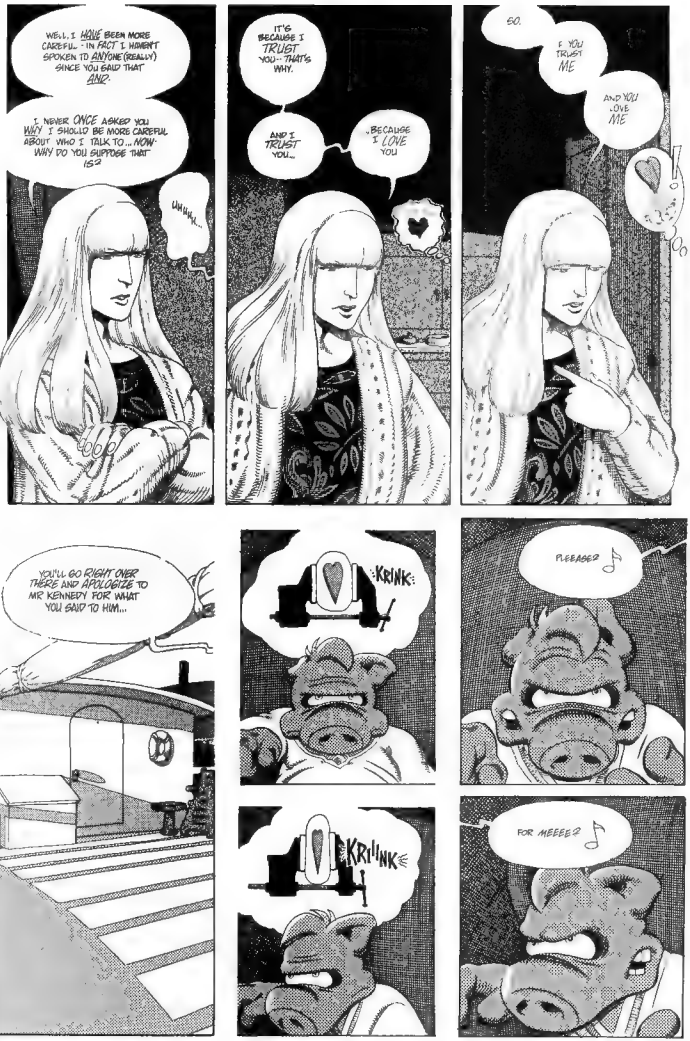
Mistress, now, of the moment, she smiled radiantly.

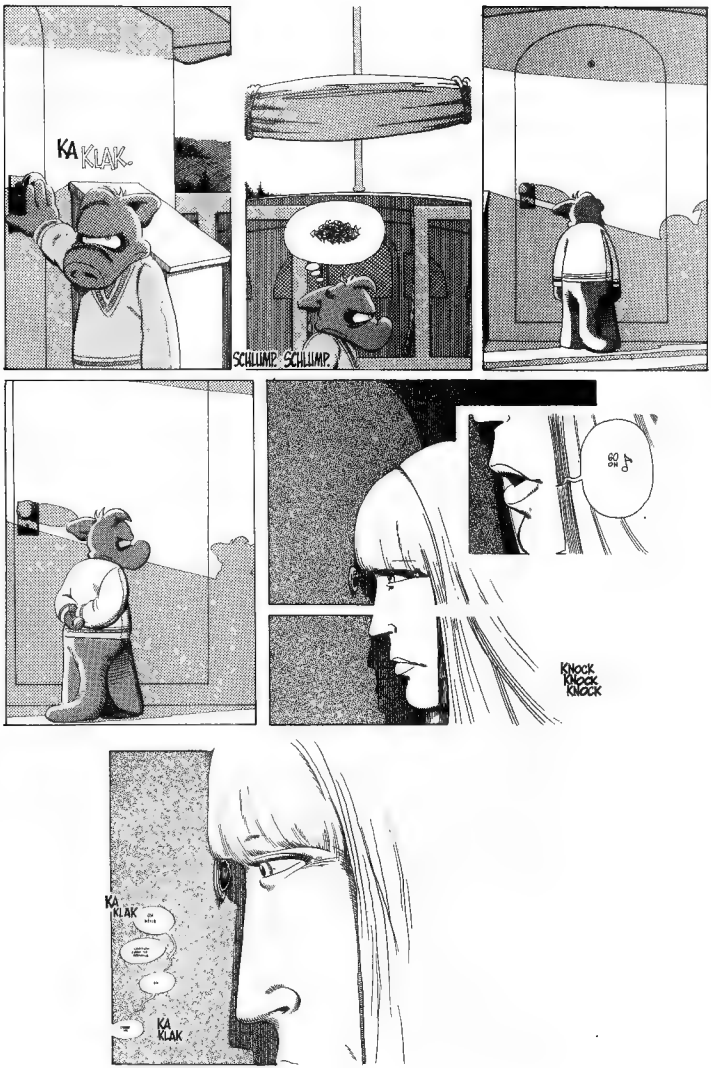
"I'm sorry. I mean the wives of your principal male characters, of course. They're always dead."

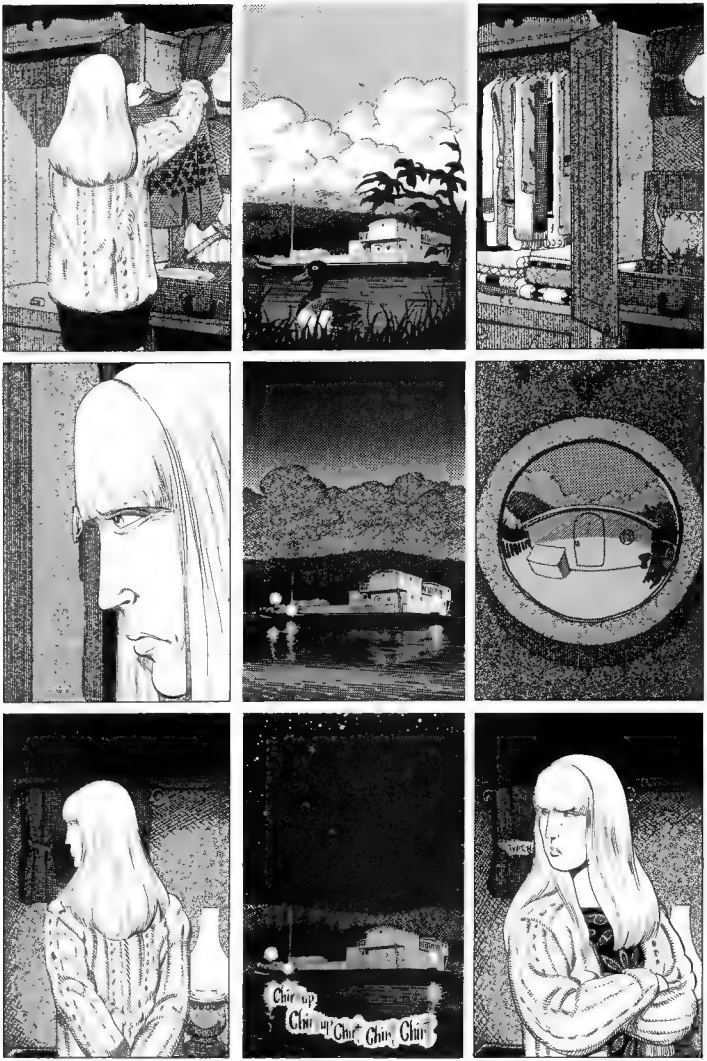



Gloria
Gloria is doing, as well... as can be...
expected
the Mothers tell me
WHAT IS SHE IN THE NUTHOUSE OR SOMETHING?
EXCUSE ME
Ka
KNOCK


SMOOTH, MON
VERY SMOOTH
HUNH?
APOLOGIZE? APOLOGIZE FOR WHAT? YOU SAID SHE IS IN A NUTHOUSE
A SANITARIUM... AND THAT'S NOT THE POINT
WHAT IS THE POINT, THEN?
YOU REMEMBER BACK AT THE DOG AND SHEPHERD?
YOU SAID TO ME.
"JAKA! YOU HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL WHO YOU TALK TO."


WELL I HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL - IN FACT I HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO ANYONE (REALLY) SINCE YOU SAID THAT AND.
I NEVER ONCE ASKED YOU WHY I SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT WHO I TALK TO... NOW WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT IS?
UHHH...
IT'S BECAUSE I TRUST YOU-- THAT'S WHY.
AND I TRUST YOU...
..BECAUSE I LOVE YOU
SO.
IF YOU TRUST ME
AND YOU LOVE ME
YOU'LL GO RIGHT OVER THERE AND APOLOGIZE TO MR KENNEDY FOR WHAT YOU SAID TO HIM...
KRINK
KRIINK
PLEEASE?
FOR MEEEE?


KA KLAK.
SCHLUMP. SCHLUMP.
GO ON
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
KA KLAK
KA KLAK


Chir up
Chir up Chir Chir Chir

CHASING SCOTT

Page 187 — Just as I was preparing to write F. Stop's speculations on Jaka and Cerebus's conversation in their stateroom — contrasting it with what they were actually saying to each other — I ran across a page from *The Beautiful and Damned* (page 21), which I had photocopied as an example of Scott Fitzgerald's script format. I don't know if Fitzgerald pioneered this — incorporating the "play script" format into the prose novel. Offhand, I can't think of anyone else who used it before or since. It jumped out at me because (so far as I know) I *did* pioneer its use in the comic-book medium, I suspect for the same reason Fitzgerald did: it's a neat solution to a section of a story which is dialogue-driven and requires little or no "scene-setting" to get its point across. Coincidentally, the page that I had photocopied as a format reference turned out to be the dialogue between Anthony Patch and Maury Noble as they're waiting for their "writer friend" Dick Carmel to join them at a restaurant. Writerly vanity being what it is, Anthony and Maury do nothing but discuss Dick and his writing prior to his arrival. By juxtaposing Jaka and Cerebus's dialogue with the Ginevra/Jozan dialogue, I thought I'd introduce my own speculation: that No One discusses writers and their work except in the imagination of writers — and that writers are only discussed by non-writers in very mundane and human terms. The Jozan/Ginevra dialogue is actually a parody of page 21 of *The Beautiful and Damned* — except for *"(Still considering his own last observation)"* which, apart from switching pronoun gender, I stole outright from page 21. I consider it an example of Fitzgerald's brilliant insights into how people actually converse. "Still considering his own last observation." Now, *that's* Writing.

F. Stop Kennedy's fictionalized name for Cerebus, Jozan, has as its origin Edouard Jozan, a French military chap that Zelda took quite a fancy to in 1931 when the Fitzgeralds were staying at the Ville Marie in Fréyjus, France. He was fictionalized by Scott Fitzgerald as Tommy Barban in *Tender is the Night* (Scribners, 1933) and by Zelda as Lieutenant Jacques Chèvre-Feuille in *Save Me The Waltz* (Scribners, 1932). Zelda's biographers — mostly women — inevitably translate the latter name as "honeysuckle," which, according to my French-English dictionary it certainly is — when unhyphenated. As two separate words it translates more provocatively into "she-goat" and "1. leaf (of a plant), 2. (newspaper) rag, 3. sheet (of paper)." I suspect that Zelda — who is the best woman writer I've ever read — was not unmindful of the distinction. I'm going to go with "sheet (of paper)."

Jozan, after his run-in with the Fitzgeralds, went on to a distinguished military career in the French navy, a decorated war hero who took part in the Dunkirk evacuation in World War II and saw duty in the Far East, and retired a vice-admiral. Nancy Milford located him for her 1970 biography *Zelda*. In answer to written questions, he denied that there had been an affair between him and Zelda, described Scott Fitzgerald as a bit of an intellectual, more sophisticated than any man he had ever met, and Zelda as extremely attractive, but not a complicated woman. In describing the Fitzgeralds' relationship, he wrote that "…they both had a need of drama; they made it up and perhaps they were victims of their own unsettled and a little unhealthy imagination." Zelda's friend Sara Mayfield interviewed Jozan for *her* Zelda biography, *Exiles from Paradise* (Delacorte Press, New York, 1971), and came (not surprisingly) to the conclusion that the "affair" was just as Zelda described it in *Save Me The Waltz:* a summer flirtation, "romantic, decorous, and slightly comic." Times being what they are, I suppose I'll just have to leave aside all questions of whether any of those adjectives are appropriate to a married woman having a summer flirtation with anyone other than her husband.

In my copy of *Save Me The Waltz (Zelda Fitzgerald: The Collected Writings* edited by — you guessed it, scholar squirrels — Matthew J. Bruccoli, Colliers, New York, 1992), Lieutenant She-Goat Sheet walks in on page 81 and walks right back out again on page 95. Seven "she-goat sheets" by my reckoning. From *Save Me The Waltz*: "Do you think he actually *is* a god?" Alabama (Zelda) whispered to David (Scott). "He looks like you — except that he is full of the sun, whereas you are a moon person." If Zelda did say anything of this kind to Scott, I think that moves the whole enterprise out of the realm of the "decorous and slightly comic" and moves the "romantic" end of things past dangerous thresholds.

By contrast Tommy Barban is all over the place in *Tender is the Night*, fighting a "duel of honour" with McKisco when McKisco's wife implies that something scandalous has taken place in Dick and Nicole Diver's house, ultimately declaring his love for Nicole and hers for him, and forcing a confrontation which leads to Dick and Nicole's divorce and Tommy and Nicole's subsequent marriage.

My own view, after a year's research touching tangentially on this nonsense, is that both "documentations" are correct or have a certain validity. I think Zelda, jealous as ever of the amount of time Scott devoted to his writing, crossed a boundary in the interest of getting a rise out of Scott to feed her own ego (having much in common with "accidentally" sending Scott a picture of herself — signed to professional golfer Bobby London — when Scott was vacillating on setting a wedding date. Zelda's henhouse biographers even tracked down Bobby London to find out if he had ever heard of her. He

hadn't, of course). When the time she spent with Edouard Jozan — like the time she spent in the company of other men while Scott was working — failed to distract Scott's attentions from his work to her, she simply magnified her "romantic, decorous, and slightly comic" flirtation into something more threatening. I believe that she told Scott that she and Edouard were in love and that she wanted a divorce. Oops, as they say. At that point, womanly vanity being what it is, there was no way out. Scott, like Dick Diver in *Tender*, insisted on a face-to-face meeting with Jozan to settle the business "like gentlemen" and jumped to the conclusion that he and Jozan might have to fight a duel, both of which — having triggered the emotional extremes which were the foundation of Fitzgerald's writing — found their way into *Tender is the Night*. Zelda, I believe, "chose" to stay with Scott (it was at least easier than trying to explain to Edouard Jozan in broken French that he—Edouard—was in love with Zelda and they were going to get married — which would have come as quite a shock to old She-Goat Sheet, I'm sure) and hope the whole thing would just blow over in time. It didn't.

As Hemingway first heard the story from Scott, Zelda had fallen in love with another man. Later, Hemingway drily noted, there were other versions, including one where Scott and Jozan had fought a duel (similar to the one in *Tender is the Night*), but he found the first explanation the most affecting. That Zelda had fallen in love with another man.

Amazing that Scott turned in his essay, "How to Live on Practically Nothing a Year," on time through the course of the "Jozan episode." The names Ginevra and Jozan have no such pregnant meaning for F Stop Kennedy, but I thought I'd share all this with those of you who are interested.

Page 189 — All of the excerpts from F. Stop Kennedy's notebooks are taken from Scott Fitzgerald's *Notebooks*, usually word for word. Plagiarism, to be sure, but I chose that course at least partly in reaction to Gore Vidal's deprecation of the material in his above-mentioned review. Vidal found only one entry worthy of Jules Renard — "In order to bring on the revolution it may be necessary to work inside the Communist party" — and found very little to recommend them apart from that. Some of the entries fall a little flat, but I definitely found — and continue to find — a rich treasure trove of Scott Fitzgerald at his best, including those I appropriated — that is, stole — for "Fall and the River." Of course, I have a tenth printing of the New Directions paperback *The Crack-Up*, edited by Edmund "Bunny" Wilson * and first published after Fitzgerald's death, where the notebook excerpts are presented with "entries which were of value to Fitzgerald as suggestions or reminders for his work, but which seem otherwise unintelligible or uninteresting" weeded out. Such was obviously not the case with the exhaustive Matthew J. Bruccoli-edited *Notebooks of F. Scott Fitzgerald* which Vidal was reviewing and which included such entries as *375 Let's all live together; 1270 Actors the clue to much; 1443 The rejection slips;* and so on — which, pretty clearly, fall well short of Jules Renard, Samuel Butler, et al.

It is speculative on my part that each of the notebook entries reflects Scott's mood at the time he wrote them, but…well, that's my best speculation. It is also highly speculative on my part that Fitzgerald wrote these notebook entries in small batches. A certain amount of compression and distillation is required — especially in the comic-book medium — so, while I don't apologize for taking liberties, I did want to alert the reader to the fact that I am, quite possibly, taking liberties here.

Page 190 — I write all the time, especially while doing something mundane like shaving or doing the dishes. So, F. Stop Kennedy does too.

Page 191 — F. Stop's ensemble is taken from a photo of Fitzgerald taken by Belle O'Hara in Hollywood sometime after December 1936 (when she married novelist John O'Hara who, apart from writing *Butterfield 8, Pal Joey, A Rage to Live*, and other novels which *weren't* made into movies, was very much a devoted fan of Fitzgerald and his writing, as I found in browsing through O'Hara's collected letters edited by — you guessed it, scholar squirrels — Matthew J. Bruccoli). In the photo, Scott Fitzgerald looks — disconcertingly — like former U.S. President George Bush. I'm sure it all has nothing to do with Fitzgerald's notebook entry "Impersonating 46 different presidents at once," nor with President Bush's declaration while in office, "I really hate Bruccoli" — er, broccoli. Actually, I'm not sure at all, but better safe than sorry.

Page 192 — I changed Fitzgerald's "the thirties" and "the forties" to "our thirties" and "our forties." Born in 1896, Fitzgerald could justifiably confuse the decade with his age, being in his twenties through most of the twenties, his thirties through most of the thirties. I disagree with the sentiment expressed only insofar as the whole thing seems to hinge on the verb "save." Love is love and friends are friends. Those things which have the potential to "save" the individual exist, to me, on a much higher plane of existence.

Page 193 — Fitzgerald's legendary insomnia which he expressed most thoroughly in his *Esquire* essay "Sleeping and Waking" (December 1934) and most concisely in his essay "Handle with Care" (*Esquire*, March 1936):

> …in a real dark night of the soul it is always three o'clock in the morning, day after day.

* Not to be confused with "Bunny" Wilson, the Australian cartoonist, best known for illustrating the "Sea Monkeys" advertisement used in many comic book ca 1960.

Page 194 — From "Handle with Care," referring to Ernest Hemingway (without naming him):

> …a third contemporary had been an artistic conscience to me — I had not imitated his infectious style, because my own style, such as it is, was formed before he published anything, but there was an awful pull toward him when I was on a spot.

I suspect that "Our fathers died. Suddenly in the night they died and in the morning we knew" is Fitzgerald "doing" Hemingway. It has the same word rhythm as one of Fitzgerald's favourite Hemingway lines (which he enthused about in a couple of letters to "Papa"), which opens "In Another Country":

> In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it anymore.

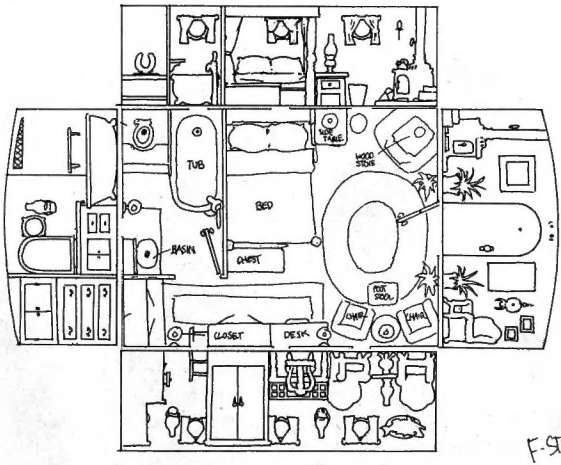
This is also my attempt to imitate Fitzgerald's handwriting. I'd say I didn't do a bad job, but it wouldn't fool Matthew J. Bruccoli for a second. One of the things that makes Fitzgerald's handwriting so hard to read is that his u's look like n's and his n's look like u's. The "pencil" effect (Fitzgerald wrote mostly in pencil) was achieved by photocopying the inked handwriting through tracing paper on a very light setting.

Page 195 — It is also speculative that he "gave up on this one," but that's the way I read it. Very, very funny to me. I was very glad that I had my own comedy duo to substitute for "Laurel and Hardy" in Fitzgerald's original piece.

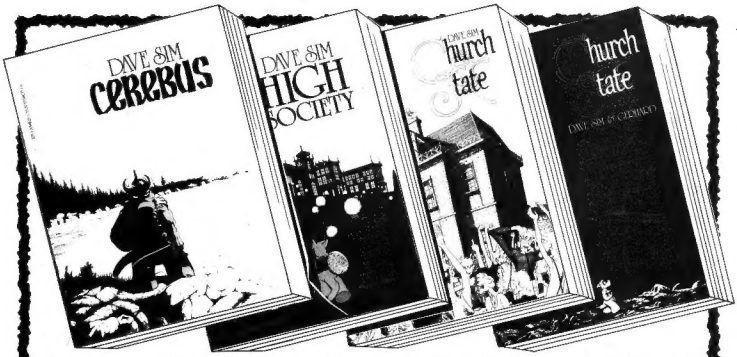
Page 196 — In the original for the "Hawthorne boys" epigram, "boy" is singular and the rest is plural, so, by majority rule, I changed "boy" to "boys" so the extract made sense. The actual name (in my New Directions paperback edition) was replaced by asterisks, indicating that it referred to an actual person whose name had been deleted — standard procedure with Notebooks and Collected Letters in the literary world, to avoid lawsuits and such. So I have no idea who the "boy" in question was. I used Hawthorne because that was the name of some fellow the Kitchener Police arrested at the library while I was doing research. "Mr. Hawthorne? Come with us, please."

Page 199 — This was my first attempt at a text piece using Scott Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned* "voice" incorporating "Ginevra" and "Jozan" into the conversation. I intended it as a tryout, and then the whole thing just arrived on the page, pretty much as you see it here. "Xena. Xena. How *is* Xena?" is patterned on a similar observation of Scott's which concludes "Zelda. Zelda. How *is* Zelda?" For the life of me, I can't find it anywhere. Sorry, scholar squirrels, I let you down.

Page 200 — Ginevra's observation about the wives of Fitzgerald's characters all being dead past a given point in his career has a certain validity. Witness "Babylon Revisited" and the never-completed *The Last Tycoon* which Fitzgerald was working on at the time of his death. Assuming that Zelda was reading his stuff in the various sanitaria where she was confined, it seems more than a little cruel, which is the point Jaka is trying to make.



F-SOP



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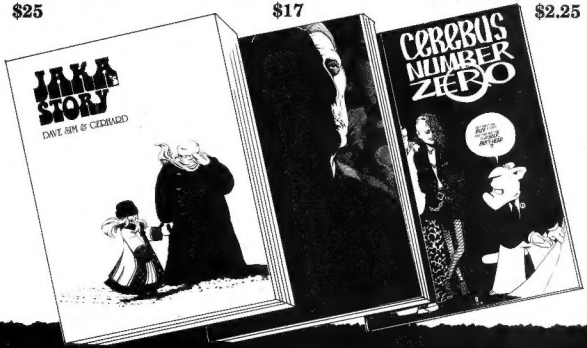

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